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6.0-2347

30 November 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. McCone

SUBJECT : Brief of Interview between the President and Aleksei Adzhubei (Editor of IZVESTIA)

1. The first question asked by Mr. Adzhubei was what the President thought about the present state of Soviet-American relations and what in his opinion must be done by the American as well as the Soviet Governments to improve relations between the two countries. The President replied that the relations today are not as satisfactory as he had hoped they would be when he first took office. He went on to say that one of the first things that he did on becoming President was to commit the United States to an earnest effort to achieve a satisfactory agreement with the Soviet Union on the cessation of nuclear tests. The President also said that we were not successful, and we were in fact still at the table in Geneva when, still negotiating, the Soviet Union resumed its tests, tests which must have been in preparation for many months, at the very time the conversations were going on.

2. In regard to the idea that every people shall have the right to make a free choice as to the kind of government they want, President Kennedy said that if the people of any country choose to follow a communist system in a free election after a fair opportunity for a number of views to be presented, the United States would accept that. The President pointed out that Mr. Jagan, who was recently elected Prime Minister in British Guiana is a Marxist, but the United States does not object -- because that choice was made by an honest election which he won.

3. To the question re idea of concluding a pact of peace between the United States and the Soviet Union, the President replied that we should have not only an agreement between our countries, but take those steps which make peace possible. He said that he didn't think that paper, and words on paper are as significant as looking at those areas which provide tension between the two systems and seeing if we can dispel that tension. He felt that one of those areas now is the problem of Germany and Berlin and if we could make progress there, then in his opinion, it would provide a most important step in improving our relations in other areas.

4. To the question re complete disarmament, the President said that there must be adequate inspection, to make sure that each side is disarming and staying in accordance with the agreements which they make. The Soviet Union has stated that it will permit us, or the international body, to inspect those weapons which are destroyed but will not permit us to carry out an

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inspection to see what weapons remain. One side could destroy a hundred bombers but still have a thousand or two thousand bombers left. To provide for orderly disarmament, we have to inspect not only those weapons which have been destroyed, but also these weapons that remain. Otherwise we do not have any guarantee of security for either side.

5. President Kennedy made the point that he recognizes that the Soviet Union can sign any treaty it wishes with the East German authorities. However, what he finds to be so dangerous is the claim that the treaty will deny us our rights in West Berlin, rights which we won through the war, rights which were agreed to by the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain and France at the conclusion of the war, and which should be continued. The President went on to say that all Berlin was put under four power authority by the agreements at Potsdam. East Berlin, which was under the immediate authority of the Soviet Union, has now been turned over to East Germany in violation of those agreements. And now the Soviet Union seeks to place Soviet troops in West Berlin. It does not suggest that the troops of the other three powers be placed in East Berlin. In other words, the Soviet Union now seeks to share in the control of West Berlin. The second point is this question of the rights of access in crossing East Germany. In the President's opinion, if such an agreement is signed, if our rights on the communication lines between the West and West Berlin -- which are now governed by the Soviet Union -- are turned over to the East German authorities, and if the East Germans should interfere with that right of access, for one reason or another, then this would provide for heightened tension, the Soviet Union might come to the support of East Germany and we would find ourselves, instead of having settled this now, once more face to face.

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MEMORANDUM FOR: Mr. McCone

In case you did not have an opportunity to read the interview between the President and Adzhubei, attached is a complete transcript, together with a brief.

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DSE (2 Dec 61)
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TRANSCRIPT of Interview between the President and Aleksei Adzhubei (Editor of IZVESTIA). In addition, those present were: Mr. Alex Akalovsky (Interpreter for the President), Mr. Georgi Bolshikov (Interpreter for Mr. Adzhubei and Editor of USSR Magazine), Mr. Pierre Salinger (Press Secretary to the President), and Mr. Jack Romagna (Shorthand Reporter, White House Staff). Held in the living room, the President's residence, Hyannis Port, Massachusetts at 10:20 a.m. (EST), November 25, 1961

MR. ADZHUBEI: Mr. President, I am happy to get this interview from you, and I would like to tell you quite frankly that your election to the high post of President of the United States office was met with great hope by public opinion in our country. In connection with this, I would like to ask you the following question --

THE PRESIDENT: May I just say that I appreciate very much your coming to the United States. I also appreciate the opportunity to talk, through you and through your newspaper, to the people of the Soviet Union. I think that communication, an exchange of views, an honest report of what our countries are like and what they want and what the people wish, is in the interests of both our countries and in the interests of peace. So we are delighted to have this opportunity.

MR. ADZHUBEI: I would like to ask you the following question. Mr. President, during the election campaign, on several occasions you expressed good intentions with respect to the necessity of improving Soviet-American relations. On the occasion of your Inauguration as President of a great country, Nikita Khrushchev, Chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, and Leonid Brezhnev, Chairman of the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR in their message to you, expressed the hope that by their joint efforts our countries can succeed in radically improving our relations and the international situation. They also expressed confidence that we can, step by step, liquidate the existing suspicion and distrust, and thus bring cooperation between our peoples. On its part, the Soviet government is always ready to support any good endeavor in that direction, and to do its best for the establishment of a stable peace in the world, in order that all peoples may live in friendship and without hatred among them.

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Mr. President, what do you think about the present state of Soviet-American relations, and what in your opinion must be done by the American as well as the Soviet governments to improve the relations between our two countries?

THE PRESIDENT : Well, I would say that the relations today are not as satisfactory as I had hoped they would be when I first took office. In fact, one of the first things that I did on becoming President was to commit the United States to an earnest effort to achieve a satisfactory agreement with the Soviet Union on the cessation of nuclear tests. As a result of that effort, at the end of March, we sent our representatives, along with Great Britain's, to Geneva for the first time with a complete treaty which we tabled for discussion. I had hoped that this would be one area where we could make real progress. It would lessen the contamination of the air, it would be a first step towards disarmament, and I felt that if we could achieve an agreement in this area, we could then move on to the other areas of disarmament which required action.

We were not successful. And, as you know, we were in fact still at the table in Geneva in August when, still negotiating, the Soviet Union resumed its tests, tests which must have been in preparation for many months, at the very time that the conversations were going on. So that has been a disappointment.

In addition, Berlin and Germany have become, I think, areas of heightened crisis since the Vienna meeting, and I think extremely dangerous to the peace, which I am sure -- I know -- both of our people want.

I think that the Soviet Union and the United States should live together in peace. We are large countries, energetic people, we are steadily providing in both our countries an increase in the standard of living. If we can keep the peace for twenty years, the life of the people of the Soviet Union and the life of the people of the United States will be far richer and will be far happier as the standard of living steadily rises.

Where we feel the difficulty comes is the effort by the Soviet Union to communize, in a sense, the entire world. If the Soviet Union were merely seeking

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to protect its own national interests, to protect its own national security, and would permit other countries to live as they wish -- to live in peace -- then I believe that the problems which now cause so much tension would fade away.

We want the people of the Soviet Union to live in peace -- we want the same for our own people. It is this effort to push outward the communist system, on to country after country, that represents, I think, the great threat to peace. If the Soviet Union looked only to its national interest and to providing a better life for its people under conditions of peace, I think there would be nothing that would disturb the relations between the Soviet Union and the United States.

MR. ADZHUBEI: That is very interesting. However as a citizen of the Soviet Union, as a member of the Communist Party, I cannot agree with you, in that part of your answer where you are saying that we are trying to "communize" the world. At the 22nd Party Congress, which, in our opinion, was an historic event, we adopted a program of communist development and we said that we are against any export of the revolution, but we are also against any export of counter-revolution. If we turn to facts, there are many countries in the world in the affairs of which, from our point of view the United States is interfering. Yesterday, I saw a T.V. program which was being shown to millions of Americans, where your commentator asserted that the whole world is under complete threat of the communists to capture the world. We would like to see an end put to this situation.

Our government and our party believe that every people chooses such a system of government as they like. Austria chose the capitalist way of development, although American and Soviet troops were there. But Cuba has chosen another way of development. And we would be happy if you, Mr. President, were to state that the interference in the affairs of Cuba was a mistake. We hope that the Cuban people will consolidate their own way of life -- as well as the Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Brazil and many other countries.

THE PRESIDENT: May I just say, without getting into a debate, that the United States supports the idea that every people shall have the right to make a

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free choice as to the kind of government they want. In the case of Cuba, let me remind you that the Castro revolution was originally supported by the great majority of the people. When Castro was leading the revolution, the statement was made that there would be free elections, and freedom for the people, and progress for the people. But Castro has not kept that commitment. Until the present government of Cuba will allow free and honest elections, in our opinion, it cannot claim to represent the majority of the people. That is our dispute with Cuba.

Mr. Jagan, on the other hand, who was recently elected Prime Minister in British Guiana is a Marxist, but the United States doesn't object -- because that choice was made by an honest election, which he won.

If the people of any country choose to follow a communist system in a free election, after a fair opportunity for a number of views to be presented, the United States would accept that. What we find to be objectionable, and a threat to the peace, is when a system is imposed by a small militant group by subversion, infiltration, and all the rest.

If the Soviet Union and this country could develop their own resources, and if you permitted the peoples of the world to develop in the way they wish to develop, then, if any nation should choose a communist system, we would recognize and accept that. And if they chose another system, then we would hope that you would recognize and accept that, too. If we could get that on both sides, I believe the Soviet Union and the United States, which have so much to gain from peace, could live in peace.

MR. ADZHUBEI: I understand you, Mr. President, and I am very happy to hear these words from you, because as you know, the future of the world depends in many respects on the relations between the United States and our country. Let the people decide what way of development they want to choose. However I would like to draw your attention to the following historical parallel. When the Bolsheviks, headed by V. I. Lenin, came to power, all the capitalist world was shouting that they were plotters and that there was no freedom in

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Russia but in 44 years our country became a great power. But this is not the issue. I would like to ask you another question --

THE PRESIDENT: You are a newspaper man and a politician.

MR. ADZHUBEI: In our country every citizen is a politician, because we like our country very much. The young and the old like the socialist system of our country and we are ready to fight for it until its victorious end. You are proud of your country, Mr. President, and we are also very much proud of our own country, and we are very proud of our party, and we are proud of V.I. Lenin.

Mr. President, sometimes it's said that in order to improve the relations between our countries, it is necessary to start with the settlement of small problems. Others believe that too many small issues have accumulated and that perhaps it would be better to start with a big act. We believe that such a big act was the visit by Nikita Sergeyevich Khrushchev to the United States in 1959. But unfortunately the results of that trip were not completely satisfactory. Mr. President, what is your attitude toward the idea of concluding a pact of peace between the United States and the Soviet Union? That would be a great step forward.

THE PRESIDENT: I think we should have not only an agreement between our countries, but take those steps which make peace possible. I don't think that paper, and words on paper, are as significant as looking at those areas which provide tension between our two systems and seeing if we can dispel that tension.

One of those areas now is the problem of Germany and Berlin. If we could make progress there, then in my opinion it would provide a most important step in improving our relations in other areas.

I stated that if we had been able to get an agreement on the nuclear tests cessation, that would lead to other agreements on disarmament. If we can make an agreement successfully which provides peace in Central Europe, if we can conclude our efforts in Laos and insure a government and a country which are neutral and independent, as Chairman Khrushchev and I agreed at Vienna, then

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we would be able to move into other areas of tension. I believe, as I have said, if we can now make an agreement on a satisfactory basis on Berlin and Germany, which is the most critical area -- because it represents a matter of great interest to both our countries, and great concern to our peoples -- then we could take other steps. If we can solve the problem of Germany and Berlin, I believe we can find our relations substantially improved.

MR. ADZHUBEI: Thank you, Mr. President, this is a most worthy thought. Especially because, as I understand you, you intend to talk seriously on these problems with our government. Let me say that the German problem is of great importance to our country, for many reasons. Not only for strictly political reasons, and not only because of prestige considerations. As you know we have allies -- Poland, Czechoslovakia, and a number of other countries. However, to date we haven't heard any sober voices from the West affirming the integrity of the borders existing in Europe and it would be very important to hear that. But there is also another aspect to the German problem. In our country, in the Soviet Union there is not a single family that did not lose some kin in the war. You know we are trying to put out the smouldering coals of the last war in Central Europe. But we do not wish only to play the role of a political fireman, as it were, though it is very important. In the heart of every Soviet citizen, in the soul of every Soviet citizen, there are, as you know, coals still burning from the last war and they are burning his soul and does not let him sleep quietly. Thus, solution of the question of a peace treaty is the hope and tranquillity in the heart of every Soviet man. After all we are still singing songs about those who did not come home from the war. I know that you participated in the war, that you are a hero of the war, and this is why I am talking to you in such lofty words. But this, if you wish, is a side-line.

Mr. President, in 1950, if I am not mistaken, our government suggested to the government of the United States -- of course, the previous administration was in power then -- that the trade relations between our countries be normalized. Now, as you know, the trade relations between our countries are in a very

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lamentable condition. Before I left for the United States, I had a conversation with my friends from the Ministry of Foreign Trade, and they asked me to inquire with you whether there are any prospects of improving the trade relations between our countries. After all there is a very old truth: together with goods, together with the exchange of goods, there also come better relations among peoples.

THE PRESIDENT : Let me say that I know that the Soviet Union suffered more from World War II than any country. It represented a terrible blow, and the casualties affected every family, including many of the families of those now in government.

I will say that the United States also suffered, though not so heavily as the Soviet Union, quite obviously. My brother was killed in Europe. My sister's husband was killed in Europe.

The point is that that war is now over. We want to prevent another war arising out of Germany. I think the important thing between the United States and the USSR is not to create the kind of tension and pressure, which in the name of settling World War II increases the chances of a conflict between the Soviet Union and its allies on the one hand and the United States and its allies on the other. What we should attempt to do is work out a solution through negotiation which will make it possible to keep the peace in Central Europe. And that is the aim of this government.

Now in regard to trade, one of the first things I did on becoming President was to change governmental policy which provided for the admission of crab meat. This was not a matter of great dollar value, but had some symbolic importance, and was a matter which Chairman Khrushchev had spoken about on several occasions.

My own judgment is that, if we can solve the problems that we are now talking about, particularly in Berlin, and ease the general tension, trade will then increase. What has diminished trade in recent months has been the difficulty

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which we have experienced in Germany and Berlin. I would hope that trade could be expanded, and in my judgment it would expand immediately, if we can bring about a peaceful and satisfactory solution to the interests of all in Germany and Berlin.

MR. ADZHUBEI: I shall communicate your words to our readers with a feeling of satisfaction. We have always thought and still think of the Americans as the realist It is your energy, your realistic approach, that has helped you to create such a wealthy country. But now I would like to ask you frankly, Mr. President, because this idea was expressed by you in several instances, whether you seriously think that the social changes which are happening in the world today are the result of actions in which Moscow has its hands? I would like to remind you of one thing. You know, in France when the bourgeois revolution won, the aristocratic Europe accused France of every mortal sin. When the October revolution won, all the world of the rich condemned that revolution. But this revolution won! You mentioned that a Marxist came to power in British Guiana. Do you think that events occurred there according to our instructions? Of course, we can't give you any assurances that there won't be social changes in the world, although you will call it the result of the "hands" of Moscow.

THE PRESIDENT: Let me say, as I indicated, if the people of these countries make a free choice, that they prefer the communist or socialist or any other kind of system, then the United States and the people of the United States accept that. That is why I gave the example of British Guiana. But of course I do not hold and I do not say that the Soviet Union is responsible for all the changes that are coming in the world. For example, since the end of World War II, the British Empire has been turned into independent states, I think 15 of them. The French community has been turned into 21 independent states. There are many changes in the world. Western Europe has joined closer together in the Common Market. These are not the result of the communists' efforts. There are many changes, as I have said, throughout the world. People want to live in different ways. That is what we want, also. If they have a fair opportunity to

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make a choice, if they choose to support communism, we accept that. What we object to is the attempt to impose communism by force, or a situation where once a people may have fallen under communism, the communists do not give them a fair opportunity to make another choice.

We had been under the impression that the Yalta Agreement and the Potsdam Agreement provided for a free choice for the peoples of Eastern Europe. They do not, in our opinion, today, have a free choice. You may argue that they may want to live under communism, but if they do not, they are not given the opportunity to change.

We believe that if the Soviet Union -- without attempting to impose the communist system -- will permit the people of the world to live as they wish to live, relations between the Soviet Union and the United States will then be very satisfactory, and our two peoples, which now live in danger, will be able to live in peace and with a greatly increased standard of living. And I believe we have such vast economic opportunities now in both of our countries that we should consider how we can get along, and not attempt to impose our views, one on the other or on anyone else.

MR. ADZHUBEI: Of course, Mr. President, I did not expect in such a short period of time I would succeed in converting you to another belief -- just as you did not expect to convert me. You have talked with our Chairman, the First Secretary of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and he did not succeed in convincing you, nor did he try to do so. This, as you know, is a matter of personal outlook. One man may consider certain elections to be free, while another would consider those elections non-democratic. For example, in a number of countries of Latin America, great revolutionary changes are taking place. For a long period of time you considered that Trujillo was elected in a democratic way. You have been saying the same about the regime of the Shah of Iran as well. But let us not engage in an argument and let us turn to the next question.

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MR. ADZHUBEI: Mr. President, may I ask you the following question? It is well known that the Soviet government has declared its readiness to accept any proposal of the Western powers on international control and inspection, if agreement on general and complete disarmament is reached. At the same time, the Soviet government does not exclude the possibility of reaching agreement on a number of measures which may decrease the danger of war and which could be effected in the nearest future. Such proposals are, for instance, the proposals on the freezing of military budgets, renunciation of the use of nuclear weapons, the conclusion of a non-aggression pact between NATO and the Warsaw Pact countries, withdrawal of foreign troops from the territories of other countries, the establishment of a nuclear free zone, or measures against the danger of surprise attack. What, in your views, are the prospects of general and complete disarmament, and of decreasing international tensions?

THE PRESIDENT: Inasmuch as the Soviet Union and the United States agreed in the declaration of principles in September, at the end of the McCloy-Zorin talks, on the goal of general and complete disarmament, the problem now becomes an attempt to implement that goal, stage by stage. The Soviet Union and the United States have a basic disagreement which must be resolved on this question. We believe that there must be adequate inspection, to make sure that each side is disarming and staying in accordance with the agreements which they make. The Soviet Union has stated that it will permit us, or the international body, to inspect those weapons which are destroyed but will not permit us to carry out an inspection to see what weapons remain. One side could destroy a hundred bombers but still have a thousand or two thousand bombers left. If you are really going to provide for orderly disarmament, it seems to me you have to inspect not only those weapons which have been destroyed, but also these weapons that remain. Otherwise we do not have any guarantee of security for either side. If we can agree to an effective inspection system so that each country can know that the other is living up to its agreement, then, in my opinion, we can move into general and complete disarmament.

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That is why I thought it so vitally important that we make an agreement on cessation of nuclear testing as the first step, and then proceed step by step through atomic weapons, through missiles, through the level of ground forces, the Navy, and all the rest. If we can get agreement on that, then we can move toward general and complete disarmament.

I think it would be helpful it NATO and the Warsaw pact engaged in a commitment to live in peace with each other. I certainly believe we should take every conceivable step to prevent surprise attack. I believe that if the relations between our countries can be normalized, there will be less military buildup on both sides, but we cannot now withdraw our troops from Europe, way back across the Atlantic Ocean, when you merely withdraw your troops to the Soviet Union which is only a few hundred miles away. That is why we need some understanding of what is going to be the situation in Berlin and in Germany. And that is why I hope negotiations will take place between our governments quickly and will come to a successful conclusion.

The statement has been made on many occasions that we object to the signing of a peace treaty, that we regard that as a belligerent act. That is not the point. It is our view that the statement which the four powers made at Geneva in 1955 providing for the reunification of Germany represents the soundest policy. To divide a country, to divide a city, to put up a wall in a city, we believe, only increases tensions rather than diminish them. And we believe that, if the German people were permitted to be reunified, adequate steps could be taken to protect the security of all involved.

Now we recognize that today the Soviet Union does not intend to permit reunification, and that as long as the Soviet Union has that policy, Germany will not be reunified. The question now is whether the Soviet Union will sign a treaty with the East German authorities which will increase tension rather than diminish it. As I said in my speech at the United Nations, we recognize that the Soviet Union can sign any treaty it wishes with the East German authorities. What we find

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to be so dangerous, however, is the claim that that treaty will deny us our rights in West Berlin, rights which we won through the war, rights which were agreed to by the Soviet Union, the United States, Britain and France at the conclusion of the war, and which we believe should be continued. But if you sign a treaty with East Germany and those rights are subject to the wishes of the East German authorities, it seems to me that that is going to increase tension. If the Soviet Union attempts in that treaty to turn over jurisdiction over West Berlin to the East German authorities, against the wishes of the people of West Berlin -- if the lines of communication and access, from West Berlin to the outside world and the West, are completely under the control of East German authorities to cut any time they so wish -- then this treaty does not bring peace, it only increases the danger.

Now I am hopeful that, in the conversations and negotiations which we hope to have with the Soviet Union, assurances will be given which will permit us to continue to exercise the rights which we now have in West Berlin, as a result of the existing four power agreement, and will permit free access in and out of the city. We do not want to stay in West Berlin if the people there do not want us to stay. But they want us to stay. When they decide that they don't want us, we will leave. But as long as they wish us to stay, it seems to me that the rights which are ours by agreement should be maintained. I am hopeful that the Soviet Union will agree with this, and in particular will agree to permit supplies and people to move in and out of West Berlin freely. Then we can in my opinion, reach a peaceful settlement in the center of Europe, and if we can reach an agreement on this question, then I believe our relations will greatly improve.

MR. ADZHUBEI: You just answered the question I was going to ask. But I cannot agree with you. I am not a specialist in the field of disarmament, but as I understand it, the McCloy-Zorin agreement was a very important step forward, and we hope that the efforts by specialists who will be authorized by our governments will lead to better results. And now a few words about Germany.

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If I understood correctly the translation, I have heard a very unrealistic term. I have in mind the term "East German authorities". It would be more pleasant to hear "government of the German Democratic Republic". You don't like the German Democratic Republic . We don't like the Federal Republic of Germany, but we have diplomatic relations with the FRG, we have very good trade relations with it. Thus, we are realists. If the government of the United States were not saying "East German authorities" but were to say "government of the GDR", that would be very good and realistic.

And now a second point. We would like to sign a peace treaty together with our World War II allies, and we hope that it will be so. It would be a great happiness not only for our government but also for our people. Nobody intends to turn West Berlin over to East Germany. That does not make sense. There is the GDR and there is the FRG with its capitalist system. Let's sign a peace treaty and let us guarantee freedom for West Berlin by every means -- by troops of the four powers, by United Nations troops -- and let's thus guarantee its rights. But this is a problem for future negotiation. Now a few words about access to West Berlin. Why complicate such a simple problem? Communication to West Berlin runs over 100 miles through the territory of the German Democratic Republic. If one needs to visit West Berlin, if it is necessary to send people, food or other goods there, then it is very elementary to ask permission for that of the government of the GDR. Sometimes I feel -- and I am saying this to you very frankly -- that some evil people, are attempting to complicate simple things and thus are deliberately creating tension. Yesterday, when I was talking with your closest advisers, I gave this example: if a man has his nervous system extremely strained, he is irritated by every noise, every sound and everything is taken by him very suspiciously. Such a man can create much trouble. We hope that the negotiations which will take place in the near future, will be objective, realistic, and will be conducted in an atmosphere of complete calm.

THE PRESIDENT: May I just make one brief response? All Berlin was put under four powe r authority by the agreements at Potsdam. East Berlin, which

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was under the immediate authority of the Soviet Union, has now been turned over to East Germany in violation of those agreements. It is no longer effectively under four-power control. And now the Soviet Union seeks to place Soviet troops in West Berlin. It does not suggest that the troops of the other three powers be placed in East Berlin. In other words, the Soviet Union now seeks to share in the control of West Berlin. That is the first point that is in question. The second is this question of the rights of access in crossing East Germany. As I gather it, you would give the East German authorities -- you say East German government -- the power to interfere with that traffic. It is stated that they would not do so, but we have no assurances in Mr. Ulbricht's statements which vary from week to week. In my opinion, if such an agreement is signed, if our rights on the communication lines between the West and West Berlin -- which are now governed by the Soviet Union -- are turned over to the East German authorities, and if the East Germans should interfere with that right of access, for one reason or another, then this would provide for heightened tension, the Soviet Union might come to the support of East Germany and we would find ourselves, instead of having settled this now, once more face to face.

The reason why we have been reluctant to recognize East Germany as a sovereign power is that we do not recognize the division of Germany. In our opinion the German people wish to have one united country. If the Soviet Union had lost the war, the Soviet people themselves would object to a line being drawn through Moscow and the entire country. If we had been defeated in war, we wouldn't like to have a line drawn down the Mississippi River. The Germans want to be united. I think it should be possible to provide for that under conditions which will protect the interests of all concerned. But the Soviet Union believes that it is more in their interest to keep Germany divided.

Now the question is -- given that decision -- can we provide for the protection of our rights in West Berlin, which were agreed to in 1945 by the Soviet Union,

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so that this is not a continuing crisis? In attempting to work out a solution of the problems which came about as a result of World War II, we don't want to increase the chances of World War III. All we wish to do is maintain a very limited -- and they are a very limited number of troops of the three powers in West Berlin and to have, for example, an international administration on the Autobahn so that goods and people can move freely in and out. Then we can have peace in this area for years. But if East Germany is going to exercise the right of authority over that access, we are going to have continued tension there -- and I simply do not see, given the strong interests of both of us in having peace in this part of Europe, why that is a wise decision. I am hopeful instead that the negotiations which we are anxious to see take place will bring about an agreement on this area which will recognize fairly the interests of all.

MR. ADZHUBEI: Mr. President, since I'm talking to you in a very frank and friendly manner, I would like to ask you to imagine, at least for a moment, the following impossible thing. Imagine that you were an officer, a veteran of the Soviet Navy, who fought in World War II. You won the war, and then the very events occurred which are now taking place. One of the parts of Germany -- the Federal Republic of Germany -- does not recognize the border which have been established after the war. It is again building up its armed forces. The Chancellor of that country goes to the United States to talk to the President of the United States and they have secret talks. The spirit of revanchism is very high in that part of Germany. What would your attitude be toward this, if you were a veteran of the Soviet Navy?

THE PRESIDENT: If I were a Soviet veteran, I would see that West Germany now has only 9 divisions, which is a fraction of the Soviet forces. Nine divisions. It has no nuclear weapons of its own. It has a very small Air Force -- almost no Navy, I think perhaps two or three submarines. So it is not a military threat. Its nine divisions are under the international control of NATO, and subject to the command of the NATO organization, which is made up of 15 countries of Europe which altogether have, in West Germany now, about 22 or 23 divisions -- about the same number as the Soviet divisions in East Germany. So that I

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do not see that this country represents a military threat now to the Soviet Union, even though I recognize how bitter was the struggle in World War II -- in the same way that Japan today represents no threat to the United States, even though twenty years ago there were four years of war in the Pacific against the Japanese. The power of countries changes -- weapons change -- science changes -- without missiles, without nuclear capability, with very few divisions today, I don't believe West Germany is a military threat.

Then I would look at the power of the United States, and I would look at the power of the Soviet Union, and I would say that the important thing is for the Soviet Union and the United States not to get into a war, which would destroy both of our systems. So as a Soviet veteran, I would want the Soviet Union to reach an agreement with the United States which recognizes the interests and the commitments of the United States, as well as our own, and not attempt to enforce single-handedly a new situation upon the United States which would be against previous commitments we had made. The Soviet Union made a commitment in regard to Berlin in 1945. Germany today is divided. Germay today is not a threat to the Soviet Union militarily.

The important thing is to attempt to reach an accord which recognizes the interests of all; and I believe that can be done with respect to Germany. I recognize that there are going to be two Germanies as long as the Soviet Union believes that that is in her interest. The problem now is to make sure that, in any treaty which the Soviet Union reaches with East Germany, the rights of the other powers are recognized in Berlin. That's all we're talking about. We are not talking about encouraging revanchism, building a great German military machine, or anything else you mention. In any peace treaty which is signed with East Germany, there must be a recognition of the rights of the United States and the other powers.

Now that does not seem to me to be a threat in any way to the security of the Soviet Union. That does not provide for any increase in the Western military

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forces, which are rather limited there. I think we could have peace in this century in Central Europe if we can reach an accord over West Berlin. To pursue another course in the name of ending World War II -- a course which threatens to increase the chance of World War III -- represents a wholly unwise policy, for you and for us.

So, if I were a Soviet officer and wanted peace, I would think peace can be won and my country's security can be assured. The Soviet Union is a strong military power. It has great nuclear capacity. It has missiles, planes -- it has a great number of divisions -- it has countries associated with it. No one is ever going to invade the Soviet Union again. There is no military power that can do that. The problem is to make an agreement which will permit us to have our interests recognized, as well as yours. That should not be beyond the capacity of us both.

Chairman Khrushchev did not, nor did I, make the arrangements in 1945 in regard to Berlin. Our responsibility, given the situation which is a difficult one, is to bring about peace, and I believe it can be done.

In short, if I were a Soviet naval officer, I would feel that the security of the Soviet Union was well protected, and that the important thing now is to reach an accord with the United States, our ally during that second war.

MR. ADZHUBEI: Mr. President, I am about to finish. Of course, you answered this question not as a veteran of the Soviet armed forces but as President of the United States, and that is quite natural. However, as I understand you, Mr. President, you are against West Germany's having nuclear weapons at her disposal, or in any degree of control over such weapons?

THE PRESIDENT: The United States, as a matter of national policy, as I said at the United Nations, will not give nuclear weapons to any country, and I would be extremely reluctant to see West Germany acquire a nuclear capacity of its own. Chancellor Adenauer stated that they would not, in 1954. That is still the policy of that government, and I think that is the wise policy.

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MR. ADZHUBEI: But you know perfectly well that many top posts in NATO are occupied by German generals, and you know that Europe is very far from the United States. Don't you think that at some point it might happen that German generals might become too influential in NATO?

THE PRESIDENT: That is why I believe it to be so important to stress the West German army is integrated in NATO. NATO is now commanded by an American; and, in my judgment, as long as German forces are integrated in NATO -- and NATO is under the control of the 15 NATO countries, none of which wants another war -- there is security for all. And I think that will continue.

Now if this situation changed, if Germany developed an atomic capability of its own, if it developed many missiles, or a strong national army that threatened war, then I would understand your concern, and I would share it. After all, we have had two wars in Europe, as well as you. But the situation today, and the situation for the future, is as I have described it. If it changed, then it would seem to me appropriate for the United States and the Soviet Union and others to consider the situation at that time. But it is not that way now, so why take the risk of having the United States, which is a powerful country, and the Soviet Union, which is also powerful, getting into difficulty with each other, when there is no real threat in Europe to you or to us. I think that we should look at things as they are in 1961.

You have stated that you are realists. This is not 1939, 1940 or 1941. Look what has happened. As I said, in the Far East, Japan's strength was entirely different in those years. China's power was also entirely different. Countries change. Situations change. And we have to be realistic enough to see where the real danger lies. The real danger today is the fact that both of us possess in our nuclear stockpiles the means to impose great devastation upon each other -- and we are the ones that have the most to lose from war.

Therefore I think, if we look at it realistically, we should be able to reach an accord which protects the interests of our two great countries, and permits us

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both to go ahead with increasing our standard of living and meeting other problems. In the United States in the last 14 years our living standard has increased 40 percent. In the Soviet Union it has gone up sharply. Nobody can benefit more from peace than the Soviet Union and the United States.

I would hope that rather than attempting to talk about conditions in Germany as they were twenty years ago, we would look at them as they are today. We have had peace, really, in Europe for 15 years. The problem now is to see if we can reach a negotiation which can settle this matter for another 15 years. Nobody knows what is going to happen in the world over the long run, but at least we ought to be able to settle this matter of Berlin and Germany.

MR. ADZHUBEI: I thank you for your attention and this time that I took from your weekend rest.

THE PRESIDENT: I appreciate very much your giving me, as President, this opportunity to talk to the people of the Soviet Union, and your courtesy in coming here. I want to emphasize that to the people of this country there is nothing that would satisfy them more than to see the two countries live at peace, and the people of the two countries enjoying a steadily increasing standard of living. I was in the Soviet Union as a student in 1939, and I understand that there have been many changes, and that the standard of living of the people is rising. The standards of the people of the United States have also risen. I am hopeful that this interview will contribute in some degree to better understanding and to peace. For, I repeat again, our two peoples have the most to gain from peace.

MR. ADZHUBEI: Thank you Mr. President.

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